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“Theater Exercise Intelligence Support Needs a ‘Renaissance’”

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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Theater Exercise Intelligence Support Needs a ‘Renaissance’

Abstract

Most theater exercises use scripted OPFOR activities to ensure that specific “blue force” training events occur on schedule. These theater exercises miss opportunities to train intelligence personnel and commanders and set unrealistic expectations about what intelligence can provide during actual combat operations.

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the need for better intelligence training for intelligence personnel, commanders, and planners during theater exercises, and to provide recommendations to improve exercises to meet this requirement. The responsibilities of the Joint Task Force Commander and the JTF J-2 are explained along with the intelligence cycle. Doctrine guiding training on the intelligence cycle and arguments for that training during theater exercises are given. An overview of how the JCS training authority - JFCOM - supports theater exercises is provided, along with the ingredients of JFCOM intelligence support for theater exercises. Intelligence training shortcomings and unrealistic expectations regarding intelligence deliverables are discussed. Real world examples of theater exercises are provided to illustrate and explain the limited role that JFCOM plays in theater exercises. Finally, the paper discusses improvements already being made in this training process, and offers specific recommendations for additional improvements to better prepare intelligence personnel and commanders to use intelligence in combat or other operations.

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Introduction

Qualified and experienced intelligence officers understand the intelligence cycle, can use it in both peace and combat operations, and can educate commanders and operators on intelligence strengths and weaknesses. CAPT Edwin T. Layton, USN has been cited as the epitome of the “expert intelligence officer,” and many authors have highlighted Layton’s anticipation of the Japanese attack on Midway Island in May/June of 1942, and credited his analysis as the key to ADM Chester Nimitz’s decision to array U.S. forces to engage the Japanese Navy during the Battle of Midway, turning the tide of the war in the Pacific.¹

Some intelligence professionals argue that the U.S. intelligence community no longer creates analysts of Layton’s caliber. This assessment may be correct. Most intelligence personnel get few opportunities to practice their craft through the full spectrum of intelligence disciplines, thus leaving the military intelligence community with highly-motivated professionals who accomplish their jobs through perseverance.

Training opportunities for intelligence personnel are guided by Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) directives and joint doctrine, Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) support for exercises run by theater Combatant Commanders (COCOMs) (which may be the most important form of training), and through service pre-deployment training efforts. But theater exercise intelligence training leaves much to be desired. More can and should be done to exercise the entire intelligence cycle (Figure 1) to support Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace (JIPB) prior to hostilities (which could deter combat) and, if combat begins, to support the tracking and analysis (OPINTEL) of enemy forces until peace is concluded. Theater exercises do not adequately prepare or test intelligence personnel and intelligence architectures to support joint combat operations. A renaissance in theater exercise

intelligence training must occur to ensure both personnel and systems/architectures are ready to support Joint Task Force commanders should contingencies erupt.

The current major theater exercises miss critical opportunities to train intelligence personnel and set unrealistic expectations about what intelligence can provide during actual combat operations. This paper will examine these shortfalls in four parts. Section one will briefly examine what joint doctrine states a Joint Task Force (JTF) J-2 and his intelligence staff are responsible for providing to a Joint Task Force Commander (CJTF). Section two will explain how JFCOM – as the JCS-designated joint training authority - supports theater exercise intelligence training. Section three will address theater training exercises (specifically in the European and Pacific Commands) and how they are impacted by exercise intelligence support. Specific examples from senior intelligence officers will be cited, contributing to the assessment that most theater exercises lack realism. The consequences of failing to train properly during peacetime will also be addressed. Finally, section four will recommend solutions to improve future exercises to more effectively train intelligence professionals, commanders, and staffs.

Section One

Joint Doctrine and the Joint Task Force J-2

To understand the role of the JTF J-2 and his intelligence team in support of the CJTF, we will quickly review joint doctrine to provide a baseline framework of the roles intelligence fills in joint operations.

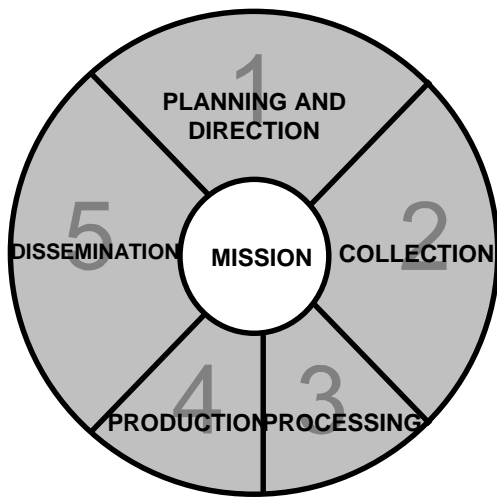
Joint doctrine states the most important roles for intelligence are assisting Joint Force Commanders (JFCs) and their staffs in visualizing the battlespace, assessing adversary capabilities, identifying adversary centers of gravity (COG), and discerning the adversary's probable intent.² These specific roles are not all-inclusive. A J-2 must fill other roles and meet additional responsibilities to support all forms of military operations, but these four specific roles are considered the most critical under joint doctrine.

Through joint doctrine we are also told that intelligence has 6 key purposes:

- Supporting the Commander
- Identifying and Determining Objectives
- Planning and Conducting Operations
- Security of Operations by Avoiding Deception and Surprise
- Security of Operations Through Deception
- Evaluating the Effects of Operations and Reorienting Forces or Terminating Operations.³

For intelligence – and specifically the J-2 – to meet these 6 key purposes, the “Intelligence Cycle” must be utilized. The intelligence cycle is the basic method by which intelligence professionals gather, analyze, and then disseminate timely, accurate, usable, complete, and relevant intelligence to commanders. This cycle applies to both peacetime and combat, but combat operations drive the intelligence cycle much harder.

Figure 1: The Intelligence Cycle⁴



In support of this cycle, the JTF J-2's primary responsibilities include:

- Participating in all Decision Making and Planning
- Synchronizing Intelligence with Operations
- Developing Detailed Intelligence Plans
- Planning the Use of Operational Forces for Collection
- Using Special Operations Forces for Special Reconnaissance
- Establishing a Joint Intelligence Architecture
- Ensuring Unity of Intelligence Effort
- Organizing for Continuous Operations
- Maintaining Flexibility
- Integrating National and Theater Intelligence Support
- Ensuring Accessibility of Intelligence.⁵

Establishing a Joint Intelligence Architecture to support the rest of the responsibilities is, perhaps, one of the J-2's most critical tasks. JP 2-0 clearly states that an "intelligence architecture must be developed so that users can train and exercise with intelligence capabilities in peacetime (to be ready for combat). Intelligence systems, network policies, procedures, connectivity, security, and fusion requirements must be part of joint training exercises and be incorporated into simulations."⁶ Part of this paper's thesis is that intelligence architectures are not effectively exercised in theater training. Clearly, joint doctrine states that intelligence architectures deserve consideration in theater exercises.

Finally, a JTF J-2 must build an organization of personnel and systems that can execute all of these tasks to provide support to the CJTF. Most JTF J-2s are undermanned in peacetime and require augmentation for theater exercises and actual combat operations. In theater exercises, the JTF J-2 usually builds a Joint Intelligence Support Element (JISE) under his control (augmentation is required) to directly support the commander. The JISE links back to the theater's Joint Intelligence Center (JIC) where longer term analysis occurs. JICs are also the conduit for collection requirements and Requests for Information (RFIs) that cannot be satisfied by JTF assets. The JISE may also be supported by a National Intelligence Support Team (NIST), which will provide direct connectivity from the JISE to the national intelligence agencies. Establishing these various intelligence support mechanisms, the integration of augmentees into the JFC J-2's staff, and the execution of the intelligence cycle must, according to joint doctrine, be exercised. Theater exercises are the best opportunity to complete this critical training.

What is the mechanism for this training to occur? This training can be driven by a theater COCOM's internal, unassisted exercise schedule or by the services preparing their forces for deployment, but the method we will examine is the intelligence training support provided during exercises by JFCOM's Joint War Fighting Center (JWFC).

Section Two

Joint Forces Command and Theater Exercises

JFCOM is the JCS-directed executive agent for providing joint training. The conduit for this training is JFCOM's Joint War Fighting Center (JWFC). Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3500.01B specifically instructs COCOMs and service chiefs to regard JFCOM as the primary trainer for all joint operations and identifies JFCOM as the "Center of Excellence" for all joint operational tactics, techniques, and procedures, as well as joint doctrine.⁷ The JWFC, with its supporting personnel and facilities at the Joint Training, Analysis, and Simulation Center (JTASC), has trained COCOMs, CJTFs, component commanders, designated forces, and subordinate staffs in the application of joint doctrine and joint tactics, techniques, and procedures.⁸ But with the advent of the JCS-directed Joint National Training Capability (JNTC), JFCOM will not only provide overarching joint training, but must also focus on Joint Tactical Tasks (such as Joint Close Air Support, Joint Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses, etc).⁹

Theater exercises cost millions of dollars, thousands of man-hours to plan and execute, and focus the efforts of a myriad of personnel away from their routine duties during peacetime (Table 1). As a result, theater COCOMs will be very selective about which exercises they call on the JWFC to support. This is good because JWFC is limited in what it can support each year due to tasking, manpower, and fiscal constraints.¹⁰

COCOMs/CJTFs receive JWFC support in two different formats. One format is for the theater COCOM to use JWFC/JTASC facilities to train in a simulated environment. JWFC provides most of the support personnel necessary to execute this method. This first method is usually only used for Command Post-level training.

Table 1: Exercises That JFCOM Will Support In 2004¹⁰

Level of support provided by JFCOM will vary by theater and exercise

Region	Exercises
PACOM	Terminal Fury and Keen Edge
SOUTHCOM	Blue Advance and Fuertes Defenses
NORTHCOM	Unified Defense and Determined Promise
EUCOM	Agile Response and Austere Challenge
CENTCOM	CJTFEX 04-2, Unified Endeavor, JNTC WRC 04-1 and JNTC JRTC 04-2
USSOCOM	Able Warrior 04-2

COCOMs need to train large numbers of personnel and forces. So, in the second format, they can invite JFCOM/JWFC to their theater to train the COCOM, his designated CJTF, the staffs, and subordinate forces assigned to that JTF's training. (JFCOM's primary training audience is the COCOM's staff and/or the JTF staff with the secondary audience being the functional and/or service components assigned to that JFC.¹¹) Obviously, the costs of choosing this method grow exponentially because more forces are involved, the training time is extended, and operational costs for people and equipment mount rapidly. This second method is definitely the preferred training method and, therefore, the focus of our examination of JFCOM/JWFC will be on their role in coordinating intelligence support for theater exercises.

The JWFC assigns a Lead Intelligence Planner (LIP) for each theater exercise. The LIP coordinates with the JWFC/JTASC to ensure that adversary intelligence products and assessments are created, to include:

- Exercise Modernized Integrated Database
- OPFOR Orders of Battle
- Military Capabilities Studies
- Key Personnel Biographies
- Selected Information Operations Products
- Human Intelligence Products
- Requests for Information (Prepped)
- Signals Intelligence Products

- Other Exercise-Dependent Intelligence Products as Required.¹²

A JWFC Intelligence Manning and Training Coordinator and the LIP will establish theater manpower requirements to support the theater J-2 and the JTF J-2, as required. Typically, the theater J-2 will be responsible for providing the majority of trained personnel (often from the reserve intelligence commands linked to that theater) to man the Joint Exercise Control Group (JECG) intelligence functions. According to JWFC, JECG manning is also provided by the JWFC, JFCOM/J-2, Joint Forces Intelligence Command (JFIC), the JWFC Support Team (JST) (which is a contractor organization), national intelligence agencies, and JFCOM components. JWFC's exercise support structure is essentially the same for all events with minor changes depending on models and simulations (M&S) used and the scenario "script," which could be combat operations or Military Operations other than War (MOOTW).¹³

The JWFC intelligence branch's primary focus is to prepare the JTF J-2. JWFC trainers lead the J-2 and his staff to develop (along with the components) a JTF J-2 Intelligence CONOPS for all aspects of intelligence operations during the event. This CONOPS then becomes the basis for development of the exercise's OPOD Annex B.¹⁴ JWFC also ensures the theater's intelligence architecture will meet the demands of the exercise. Finally, JWFC intelligence personnel (trainers and evaluators) review the theater and JTF J-2s' training goals (for assessing personnel, architecture, etc) and ensure their staffs will be "shadowed" by JWFC personnel to provide training, feedback, and lessons learned at the conclusion of the exercise.

Most COCOMs and CJTFs feel JWFC provides solid training during major theater exercises. However, a detailed study of the inner workings of the intelligence processes in these theater exercises would show that intelligence becomes an "Easter Egg." This means

the JTF J-2's staff looks pretty, but in reality the functions haven't been tested and the egg may rot if required to support combat operations. More importantly, theater COCOMs/CJTFs and their operational planners do not receive training that helps them to understand the intelligence cycle, the strengths and weaknesses of intelligence, and how to properly use intelligence in their planning and decision making.

Section Three

How Intelligence Support for Theater Exercises Really Works

Each COCOM has its own policies and procedures to provide training for assigned or attached forces. First we will examine European Command's (EUCOM) use of JWFC's support. Then we will show how Pacific Command (PACOM) differs in their approach to theater exercises and intelligence training.

In EUCOM, the Joint Analysis Center (JAC) Molesworth routinely provides significant support to theater exercises. The JAC's Exercise Support Branch, in tandem with EUCOM J-25 (Exercises), plans and coordinates intelligence support for EUCOM's exercises. Normally, one of the JAC's Joint Reserve Intelligence Support Elements (JRISE) will be tasked to develop and script exercise injects designed to achieve the exercise objectives. EUCOM usually does not use the JWFC for detailed planning or exercise support. JAC (and EUCOM) prefer to use detachments or teams from the JRISEs to support an exercise from "cradle to grave." A JRISE team will attend the exercise planning conferences, work with planners to develop a script, and then write injects using standard JAC message formats and procedures. These teams work with the JECG to inject the intelligence products into the exercise JTF/CTF using standard JAC dissemination procedures used in peacetime and hostilities. Exercise intelligence dissemination procedures are regularly modified to conform to exercise director requirements, especially with NATO exercises. Additionally, JAC deploys portions or all of its Deployable JTF Augmentation Cell (DJTFAC) in support of at least one major exercise each year, putting deployable analysts with the JTF/CTF they would support if a JTF/CTF were formed.¹⁵

EUCOM and JAC Molesworth limit JWFC's participation in EUCOM theater exercises because JWFC exercise planners script from doctrine – JFCOM doctrine – and not from EUCOM doctrinal publications that more accurately reflect EUCOM's complex interrelationships, support arrangements, and war fighting experiences. In JAC's view, JWFC intelligence scripting is generic, geared toward achieving a state of play for operators, and has little relevance for intelligence training.¹⁶

Exercises are somewhat different in PACOM. The JWFC and the Joint Intelligence Center Pacific (JICPAC) both regularly support theater exercises. JWFC's involvement in the past, however, has tended to be limited to forces in Japan, Korea, and during major theater exercises like Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC), which is a major multinational exercise held on a semi-annual basis. Our focus of study in PACOM will be on three JTF-level commands, to include the U.S. Navy's 3rd and 7th Fleets and Commander, Pacific Fleet.

For the U.S. Navy's 3rd Fleet, JWFC and JICPAC have provided little or no intelligence training support in recent years for any training events.¹⁷ This lack of support for 3rd Fleet does not necessarily portend a crisis in the making. PACOM has a list of priority exercise efforts and 3rd Fleet's training is handled by 3rd Fleet, under the guidance of the Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet and Commander, Fleet Forces Command. In fact, 3rd Fleet regularly sponsors Joint Task Force Exercises (JTFEXs) designed to test deploying Carrier Strike Groups (CSGs) and Expeditionary Strike Groups (ESGs) as well as other forces, all working towards establishing joint operational skills. But even in these JTFEXs, intelligence realism is lacking and intelligence personnel are denied adequate training to prepare them to support intense combat operations.

In the 7th Fleet Area of Responsibility (AOR), major theater training events are often supported by both JICPAC and JWFC. Routine examples of this training include Tandem Thrust (bilateral with Australia), Ulchi Focus Lens (bilateral with Republic of Korea), and Terminal Fury (principally a U.S. exercise).

Terminal Fury (TF) is an excellent example of an exercise in which realistic intelligence training is limited. For TF 2002, JICPAC provided manning support through the JECG but little else. Personnel from the JWFC served as additional JECG experts and also as trainer/observers in both TF exercises, providing feedback to the CJTF and his intelligence staff, as well as subordinate staff intelligence organizations.¹⁸ Major intelligence training improvements occurred between TF '02 and TF '03. TF '02 had minimal JICPAC/JWFC intelligence support for the JTF J-2s and their staffs and only scripted simulated OPFOR activities. But TF '03 saw JICPAC engaged in great detail, especially the JICPAC analysts responsible for the PACOM region on which the exercise was focused. While still not meeting the level of realism desired by many intelligence personnel, the added detail improved the scenario and allowed intelligence staffs to provide more realistic support for their commanders and planners.¹⁹

Terminal Fury is only one example (among dozens) of a theater exercise using “scripted” intelligence to drive “operational decisions,” which are often nothing more than events on an exercise checklist. In reality, the intelligence cycle will drive virtually all decisions during combat and other operations. TF '03, while a substantial improvement over TF '02 in many respects, still failed to allow for any realistic JIPB against a notional “hostile nation,” failed to test the imagery architectures through the Joint Services Imagery Processing System (JSIPS), didn't allow for a realistic intelligence collection plan, and used

reserve intelligence personnel as JECG experts who may, or may not, have known anything about the adversary they were portraying. The scripted simulated enemy movements and actions were relatively unsophisticated and the intelligence “feeds” sent out by the JECG bypassed the intelligence architecture which would be used in actual operations. The intelligence staffs were significantly under-stressed to provide insight into enemy actions because the JECG “feeds” provided complete intelligence on enemy forces. Finally, the current intelligence picture (OPINTEL) was projected with total clarity, allowing the commanders to target and engage enemy forces virtually at will and giving them an unrealistic portrayal of probable enemy activity.²⁰ None of these will exist in a real world crisis.

Section Four

Improvements Have Begun

We've established that most theater exercises use scripted Opposition Force (OPFOR) activities to ensure specific "blue force" training events occur on time. We've also shown that intelligence training opportunities during major theater exercises are summarily retarded by "scripted" events as opposed to "freestyle" play in which an OPFOR can maneuver at will and therefore be a less predictable enemy. Finally, we've shown how intelligence architectures are bypassed in favor of artificial "feeds" from the JECG, ensuring that intelligence architectures are not tested and evaluated for support to combat operations. But improvements are beginning.

In TF '03, the new PACOM J-2, RDML Jack Dorsett, and the new JICPAC Commander directed JICPAC country analysts to directly participate in the exercise.²¹ The analysts' expertise aided the overall intelligence effort and provided much better granularity for the JTF J-2s, their staffs, and the component intelligence organizations, allowing them to better assess enemy capabilities, more accurately define enemy COG, and more realistically predict enemy courses of action.²² With RDML Dorsett's influence on future PACOM exercises, the intelligence support provided to those exercises by JICPAC will certainly improve over time. However, it remains to be seen if PACOM intelligence nodes will reach the level of competence that the Central Command (CENTCOM) JIC possesses after almost 14 years of continuous combat operations. CENTCOM JIC's ability to provide intelligence support to combat operations is unrivaled amongst any other theater, but even they had difficulty meeting the demands of such intelligence requirements as BDA, analysis and assessment of Iraqi capabilities and intentions, etc, during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.

How will PACOM, EUCOM, and the other relatively untested COCOM intelligence structures perform should a major long term combat contingency erupt in their theaters? One hopes they will perform well enough for U.S. forces to achieve a decisive victory. But hope is not a course of action.

Recommended Solutions

Theater exercises should provide the COCOM/JTF J-2s and their respective staffs (as well as the subordinate command intelligence staffs) with an outstanding training opportunity. This opportunity should include a chance for the commanders and their intelligence officers to plan operations to exercise the full intelligence cycle against some type of “living” OPFOR rather than using an “exercise packet” that provides all the adversary details necessary for the exercise. The following recommendations are provided to COCOMs and CJTFs to help improve intelligence training during theater exercises.

- (1) The adage of “train like you’ll fight and fight like you train” must be adopted by each theater. What does this mean, exactly? Each theater COCOM continually tracks potential adversary nations and potential crisis regions. Theater exercises should focus on a specific real world threat and JIPB should be completed against this real world threat nation or region throughout the exercise. If modeling and simulation is used, then that threat nation’s real world assets should be tracked using actual Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) assets. Collection would then reflect the adversary’s actual operating patterns. If a living OPFOR is used, then the OPFOR should mimic that adversary’s tactics, techniques, and procedures. OPFOR Commanders should be given discretion to use innovative tactics to defeat the CJTF forces to achieve “red” objectives. This methodology will significantly enhance training realism.²³
- (2) Theater exercise plans should be restructured. Rather than dozens of small exercises and a few major events per year in each theater, four very large exercises – one per quarter and each exercise training a different CJTF - should be planned. Each COCOM should design the four exercises as multinational training events and should include as many nations as practicable, contributing to the Theater Security Cooperation Program and testing the combined command structures, multi-national communications links, and ensuring coalition procedures are established before a crisis erupts.

- (3) To improve the JWFC's relevance for theater intelligence training, JWFC needs to develop scenarios that intentionally present unclear and contradictory information to analysts, training them to "sift through the chaff to find the wheat," and forcing commanders, J-2s, and analysts to use collections to verify intelligence.²⁴ JWFC must invigorate its role as the joint trainer and should support each of these quarterly exercises in some fashion – probably most effectively through trainer/observer and "umpire" support. Scenarios should contain multiple paths/threads, with a commander's operational decision options based solely on the analysts' and commander's assessments of the enemy.²⁵ The BEST way to do this is to have a "living" OPFOR focusing its efforts on attaining enemy objectives. The CJTF must use his JIPB to assess the enemy's actions and make operational decisions based on those assessments.
- (4) JIPB must be exercised as realistically as possible. As an example, J-2s should request all-source collections for an exercise target area (preferably a real potential adversary) as part of the JIPB prior to an exercise rather than having that intelligence provided in an "exercise packet." Short notice tasking procedures should also be exercised. These collection efforts should be supported by the COCOMs, national intelligence agencies, and DoD, and should be a priority training event to ensure the intelligence staffs learn how to work "the system." If exercises are targeted against a real threat nation, then the exercise and real world collection requirements can be met simultaneously.
- (5) A preliminary exercise phase, run prior to the actual theater exercise and focusing on intelligence processes required to conduct JIPB and to establish a foundation for current intelligence (OPINTEL), would allow intelligence teams to better track and predict what an adversary might do once actual combat operations commence.²⁶ This "pre" exercise would provide highly detailed training for the commanders and intelligence staffs to learn how to use intelligence assets and procedures, better preparing both for combat. (Of course, drawbacks to this process would include greater cost, more time required, and less operator-intelligence interaction that drives many intelligence requirements. But participation by principal staff members during the intelligence-focused preliminary exercise might solve many of these potential shortcomings, especially if the exercises were focused on the most likely actual threats facing each COCOM and their designated JTFs.)
- (6) Realistic ISR assets must be used in theater exercises to mirror those used in actual combat operations. Currently, for example, 3rd Fleet might get a "surrogate UAV" (likely some sort of aircraft pretending to be a UAV) for two flights of three hours per day - thus, the UAV will find its target within that scripted timeframe. This fake UAV requirement may well be a resource constraint, and even though it prevents unrealistic IPB training, it does provide a limited opportunity to flex the collection and targeting process and to work through appropriate procedures.²⁷ But is that really an adequate solution to train personnel for actual combat operations in which dozens of ISR assets may be in use during any particular time of day? Probably not. Dedicated ISR assets must be used to more effectively portray the ISR assets that

would be tasked for real time intelligence collection and targeting during combat operations.

- (7) The existing intelligence architecture and dissemination procedures must be used in every exercise rather than using an “e-mail network” from the JECG to intelligence nodes to drive scripted events. Additionally, realistic timelines for intelligence collection, processing, and dissemination must also be honored. As a result of past practices, commanders now expect perfect intelligence on an unchanging enemy with perfect imagery on pre-surveyed areas. This false and dangerous expectation has set up the intelligence community, as well as the operators, for possible failure in a real world situation. Little analysis is conducted because it is all scripted to the hour. No lead time is required for collections because it is provided in the “exercise packet.” There is little to no enemy reaction to “blue” so no one understands how to (or is prepared to) collect, analyze, or report on changes in the situation. The focus is on the operators achieving the landing, fires, or maneuver event on a time schedule; intelligence, enemy activity, or other friction-causing events are not allowed to interfere with the exercise script.²⁸
- (8) The theater JICs have had personnel stripped from their ranks over the past 10 years due to funding cuts. This has negatively impacted the JICs’ ability to provide dedicated exercise scripting/support cells, forcing the COCOMs to turn to JFCOM for expertise in writing, preparing for, and then executing major theater training exercises. A realistic opponent is critical for training both operators and intelligence personnel, not to mention the commanders being tested. It is time to rebuild the theater JICs with more personnel who could serve not only as country analysts (and duty experts for training events) but also increase the ability of the JICs to support operational forces during actual contingencies.

Conclusions

To be prepared for combat operations, military units must train in a realistic way. However, one of the greatest perceived shortcomings of most major theater training exercises is the lack of realism in executing the intelligence cycle. Intelligence drives virtually all combat decisions at every level of command. But often in theater exercises the intelligence cycle is bypassed so the combat training can occur. The combat training is, of course, the primary reason for every exercise. But “fairy dusting” intelligence often provides commanders with almost total clarity of the battlespace, allowing them to make decisions with little or no additional branch or sequel planning. This “fairy dusting” leads to two distressing impacts – the development of unrealistic expectations of what intelligence can provide to a commander, and retarded training opportunities for the entire intelligence structure supporting a theater, negatively impacting the readiness of intelligence personnel to support operations.

Granted, most combat operations would likely succeed even without significant intelligence realism during training simply because the United States has an overwhelming technical advantage over all potential adversaries. Nevertheless, if intelligence personnel, systems, and procedures are not tested thoroughly during theater exercises, their ability to be immediately effective in a crisis will be in doubt. Adversaries are not cooperative – they will do the unexpected and will obscure their true activities and intent. Having a combat ready force of professionals is a key factor in providing credible deterrence to potential aggressor nations.

A renaissance in intelligence training is needed to return to the practices that led the U.S. to possess detailed knowledge of potential adversaries. Whereas we used to focus large

numbers of personnel against a smaller target set (the Soviet Union), we now spread fewer analysts across ten-fold more targets and expect the same level of intelligence detail. Only the United States' overwhelming operational superiority prevents disaster. Yet this lack of intelligence detail is now an accepted fact and is often reflected in training. Training in theater exercises must reflect the actual methods used in combat, but this will occur only if we invest in improving day-to-day analytic efforts with adequate resources and the core training necessary to develop truly skilled analysts.²⁹ We need to develop more CAPT Laytons.

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³ Ibid, p. I-3.

⁴ Ibid, p. II-1.

⁵ Ibid, p. III-10.

⁶ Ibid, p. IV-3.

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⁸ Joint Forces Command, Joint Warfighting Center Exercise Handbook, (Suffolk, Virginia: 09 July 2003), p. I-2.

⁹ Interview with LtCol Mark Bennett, USAF, via e-mail, January 2004. LtCol Bennett is the Senior Intelligence Officer at the Joint Warfighting Center under the Joint Forces Command.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Joint Forces Command, Joint Warfighting Center Exercise Handbook, (Suffolk, Virginia: 09 July 2003), p. VI-1.

¹² Ibid, p. VI-5 to VI-6.

¹³ Interview with LtCol Mark Bennett, USAF, via e-mail.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Interview with LCDR Eric Law, USN, via e-mail, January 2004. LCDR Law serves as the Maritime Operations Officer at Joint Analysis Center – Molesworth, United Kingdom.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Interview with LCDR Steve Boraz, USN, via e-mail, January 2004. LCDR Boraz is the Commander, U.S. Third Fleet J-27, Intelligence Training and Readiness Officer.

¹⁸ Interview with CDR Maureen Neville, USN, Newport, Rhode Island, 13 January 2004. CDR Neville served as the Commander, 7th Fleet, Deputy N-2 during Exercise Terminal Fury. Terminal Fury uses Commander, 7th Fleet as the initial JTF Commander, who is then replaced by Commander, Pacific Fleet halfway through the exercise to practice staff and command transitions.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ The concept of executing continuous JIPB against potential adversary nations and transitioning from that every day tracking into a major theater exercise belongs to Mr. James FitzSimonds, Naval Warfare Development Command, Newport, Rhode Island.

²⁴ Interview with LCDR Eric Law, USN.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Interview statements from both CDR Neville, USN, and LtCol Bennett, USAF, regarding the establishment of a separate intelligence exercise prior to the major theater exercises to train and evaluate the intelligence staffs in each theater.

²⁷ Interview with LCDR Steve Boraz, USN.

²⁸ Interview with Major James West, USMC, via e-mail, January 2004. Major West formerly served as a JTF Deputy J-2 as well as the S-2 with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit in Okinawa, Japan.

²⁹ Interview with LCDR Eric Law, USN.